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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Date of transcription 09/12/2001

RE: LEAD CONTROL NUMBER: DL267 AND CE66

VANESSA DIAS MINTER was interviewed at the American Airlines Southeastern Reservations Center, 500 Gredson Drive, Cary, North Carolina 27511, [REDACTED] MINTER is an International Reservation Agent for American Airlines and has been so employed for one year. Also present during the interview was [REDACTED] After being advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the interview, VANESSA MINTER provided the following information:



VANESSA MINTER advised that she arrived at work at the American Airlines Southeastern Reservations Center around 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. She showed her security badge to access the facility and was at her work station by about 7:00 a.m. MINTER normally works a shift from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. MINTER stated that things were going pretty slow on the morning of September 11, 2001, and that she was not receiving many calls.

At approximately 7:59 a.m., MINTER received a telephone call at her work station from a female caller. The caller's first words were, "I think we're being hijacked." MINTER asked the caller if she could hold for a moment. MINTER looked for, but was unable to find, the emergency button on her phone pad. MINTER then speed dialed the American Airlines international resolution desk. Her call was answered by WINSTON (Last Name Unknown) (LNU). MINTER told WINSTON what the caller had said. MINTER then told WINSTON that she

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Investigation on 09/12/2001 at Cary, North Carolina

File # 265D-NY-280350-CE

Date dictated 09/12/2001

by SA [REDACTED] :cws:egp

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was going to "open up the line," which resulted in she, WINSTON, and the caller all being on the telephone line at the same time. MINTER indicated that WINSTON was physically located on the other side of the building from her. WINSTON asked MINTER if she had pushed the emergency button on her phone. When MINTER responded negatively, WINSTON pushed the emergency button on his telephone. MINTER explained that pushing the emergency button causes the call to be recorded and also alerts the operations area so that one of their personnel can pick up the call. MINTER advised that she could tell from a light on her telephone that a supervisor from the Operations Department had gotten on the line. MINTER informed that [REDACTED] (LNU) initially picked up the call for Operations. However, [REDACTED] apparently quickly handed the call off to NYDIA GONZALES. MINTER advised that [REDACTED] did not say anything while he was on the phone call.

MINTER stated that the caller was calm but scared. The caller identified herself as (First Name Unknown) (FNU) ONG. ONG initially said she was on American Airlines flight #12. ONG then amended her statement and said she was on flight #11 from Boston to Los Angeles. ONG said, "We're in the air." ONG told MINTER that she was sitting in a jump seat in the coach cabin in the back of the plane. When ONG said she was sitting in the jump seat, MINTER realized that ONG was either a crew member or crew-qualified. ONG stated that the #5 and the #1 had been stabbed. MINTER assumed that ONG was referring to other crew members when she referred to #5 and #1. ONG said something to the effect of, "It happened in the first class cabin." ONG mentioned that they were having trouble breathing. ONG indicated that something was in the air in the passenger cabin but did not clarify what it was. MINTER stated that ONG did not mention anything about oxygen masks being released. ONG said that they could not communicate with the cockpit. ONG stated that the hijackers were in the cockpit but did not indicate how they got in. ONG reiterated that #5 had been stabbed but that #5 was not seriously injured. ONG said that #1 was laying on the floor and was unconscious or dead. MINTER recalled ONG saying something about a passenger being stabbed and possibly being dead. ONG stated that they were trying to get through to the medical desk but could not get through. ONG said that there were no doctors on board.

MINTER stated that she thought ONG was relaying information that was being provided to her. She did not believe ONG could actually see what was going on. ONG did not indicate how she came to be sitting in the jump seat at the back of the plane. ONG stated that the passengers in the coach section of the airplane did not know what was going on.

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MINTER advised that GONZALES broke into their conversation and asked if the pilot had made any announcements. ONG responded that no announcements had been made and added that they could not get through to the cockpit. ONG said they could not reach the co-pilot and stated something to the effect of, "They're (the hijackers) already in the cockpit." After telling GONZALES that they could not get through to the cockpit, ONG said that the plane was descending. ONG stated that the airplane was "flying sideways." WINSTON asked if she meant the plane was flying erratically. ONG said "Yes." MINTER remembered ONG saying the plane was leveling off and then that the wings were tilting. MINTER also recalled ONG saying that the airplane was "going down" but thought she meant the plane was just descending rather than about to crash. b6  
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MINTER stated that ONG kept repeating herself during the conversation. ONG said repeatedly that there were stabbings. MINTER recalled hearing references to the hijackers sitting in seats 2A and 2B in the first class cabin of the aircraft. MINTER was not sure whether she heard the references to seats 2A and 2B during the phone call with ONG or later while people were talking in the American Airlines operations area. At one point during the phone conversation, ONG requested MINTER and the other parties on the call to pray for them. MINTER recalled that, toward the end of the conversation, ONG said "Oh my God!" MINTER could not recall whether she heard the "Oh my God!" exclamation directly or was told that by someone after she got off the call. MINTER also remembered ONG saying that some of the passengers were moving because they were having difficulty breathing.

MINTER advised that she did not hear the end of the phone conversation with ONG. Near the end of the call, MINTER gave her headset to [redacted] who was standing near her. [redacted] could not use MINTER's headset, because she had a custom-made earpiece. [redacted] went and got his headset. When [redacted] returned, he got on the line with ONG. MINTER stood by [redacted] as he listened to the conversation. After a short period of time, [redacted] took off his headset. When [redacted] took off his headset, MINTER realized that the plane had crashed or they had lost communication with ONG. MINTER stated that she was still going over in her mind what she had heard. MINTER estimated that she was on the telephone call with ONG for over 20 minutes before [redacted] took over for her.

MINTER stated that ONG did not give a description of the hijackers nor did she indicate how they were able to get into the cockpit of the airplane.



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Following the termination of the telephone conversation with ONG, MINTER talked to her [REDACTED] told her she needed to write a statement documenting the conversation with ONG and be available for a debriefing. MINTER went to a conference room and wrote a statement describing the conversation with ONG. MINTER later ended up in the American Airlines operations area, although she was unsure how she got there.

While in the operations area, MINTER heard people talking about the hijacking. MINTER recalled someone saying something about information still being accessible in the system and heard [REDACTED] instruct someone to "block it," apparently to keep it from being seen by others. MINTER advised that the flight's manifest and passenger ticketing information were available in the operations area. Also while in the operations area, MINTER heard that the hijackers had purchased one-way airline tickets over the Internet.

While she was involved in the telephone conversation with ONG, MINTER pulled up some information on the flight on her computer. MINTER determined that flight #11 took off from Boston at 8:04 a.m. She learned that the airplane was a 767 with 92 passengers on board.

After writing her statement, MINTER waited around the operations area for awhile. MINTER began to feel that she was in the way in the operations area, so she left and went back to her terminal. At that point she felt calm and believed she was okay emotionally. MINTER took a couple of calls at her work station. The second call was from a woman in Denver who needed to travel to Frankfurt, Germany, for her mother's funeral. MINTER could not do anything to help the caller due to the suspension of all flights. The caller was upset, and that caused MINTER to become upset. At that point, MINTER left her work station and went to the lunch patio area. MINTER waited at the lunch patio in case someone needed to debrief her. MINTER tried not to speak to anyone about the telephone call with ONG, since she had been told not to talk about the conversation. MINTER stayed until 3:30 p.m. when she went home.

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